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Daniloff Warns Other Journalists

*All Seen as 'Targets'
For 'Provocation'*

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Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, Sept. 14—American reporter Nicholas Daniloff told a news conference here today that he had suffered "mental torture" during the 13 days he spent in a Moscow prison, and he warned other correspondents that "all of you are potential targets" of Soviet "provocation."

Daniloff, released from prison Friday into the custody of the U.S. charge d'affaires, Richard Combs, still faces charges of spying against the Soviet Union.

Daniloff used his first full public appearance since his Aug. 30 arrest to stress that he was framed by the KGB secret police and to warn the western reporters present, including many American colleagues, that they too are vulnerable to such actions.

He said that the setup was geared to give Moscow leverage in gaining the release of Gennadi Zakharov, a Soviet U.N. employee arrested by the FBI in New York on spying charges a week before Daniloff's arrest here.

Zakharov also was released on Friday to the custody of Yuri Dubinin, the Soviet ambassador to the United States, in an arrangement worked out by U.S. and Soviet diplomats.

Daniloff, the correspondent here for U.S. News & World Report, today dismissed Soviet allegations that he had admitted working with the Central Intelligence Agency as

"a crude distortion of my testimony."

Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov, in a Saturday press conference, said Daniloff had signed a statement that alleged, among other things, that he had been operating on the instructions of Murat Natirboff, a former U.S. Embassy official who the Soviet news agency Tass said had served as CIA station chief in Moscow.

Daniloff today said the reference to Natirboff seemed to be related to an unsolicited letter, addressed to the U.S. ambassador, which he found in his mailbox in 1985 and delivered, unopened, to the embassy.

He said he had later been asked "a few questions" by the U.S. Embassy about the letter, and had answered them. But he gave no further details about the incident today and, in answer to further questions about the Soviet charges against him, said, "I don't really want to be drawn into the details of the case."

In a brief report of Daniloff's press conference today, Tass called the American reporter a "CIA agent," and said that he "testified during the investigation that, besides gathering data of a military character, he took part in the CIA's instructions in the espionage act of establishing secret communications with a Soviet citizen."

But today Daniloff said he had reiterated throughout the investigation that he had never worked on the instructions of any government.

Describing himself as "the victim of provocation," Daniloff told reporters, "What's happening to me is a problem that involves all of you."

He added, "All of you are potential targets of this kind of action."

The 52-year-old veteran Moscow correspondent, who was ending his second tour here when arrested, also called on diplomats to come to an "imaginative and rapid" resolution of his case and allow him to go home.

He suggested the meeting between Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze scheduled for Friday in Washington as the "first deadline" for diplomats to resolve the case. But Daniloff said he did not want his case to dominate the talks, which U.S. officials have said will serve as a planning meeting for the U.S.-Soviet summit conference due to take place this year.

Asked to describe the conditions in Lefortovo, the military prison where he had been detained, Daniloff at first said the staff had been polite.

But in an emotional voice, he added, "Even though I was not cold, I was not hungry, I was not abused in any physical sense, the mere fact of being transferred into a prison cell, being isolated from my family and friends, not being allowed under the Soviet law to have legal counsel, being interrogated every day for four hours a day for two weeks, is a very, very hard burden."

"Frankly, I'd have to tell you it's mental torture."

Daniloff looked thinner than before his arrest. With his voice sometimes cracking, he appeared under stress. He was flanked by his wife, Ruth, and Henry Trewhitt, a deputy managing editor of U.S. News & World Report.

Daniloff said that eight KGB officers grabbed him on Aug. 30, shortly after he took an envelope from a Soviet acquaintance named Misha. Daniloff said he had not known what was in the envelope. But when KGB agents opened it, it turned out to hold photographs of military installations and maps of Soviet troop deployments in Afghanistan—material that the KGB says implicates him in espionage.

"Once you have been sandbagged by eight men on a street, totally unsuspecting, put into a van, your hands tied behind your back, your hands in handcuffs, of course you wonder—why the hell did I do that," he said.